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ABSTRACT

The move toward standards-based instruction calls for greater student involvement in the learning process. Cooperative learning is widely used as many standards-based school departments advocate greater employment of constructivist classrooms as the most appropriate vehicle of instruction. During academic year 2002-03, 42 students from California State University Hayward's (CSUH) teacher education credential program, in conjunction with the Build a Future Without AIDS program at the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, taught a conflict resolution curriculum/AIDS education curriculum to inner city public high school students who were part of an alternative school program for adjudicated youth. The CSUH students randomly assigned public school students to groups of four, which were then divided into two pairs. Each pair was assigned a pro or con position on a curricular issue. They researched, presented, and discussed their positions, critically analyzed their opponents' positions, and rebutted their opponents' attacks. Then, they reversed perspectives and presented persuasive arguments again. Finally, they synthesized different facts and ideas into a single position. Researchers collected data on students' attitudes toward collaboration and perceptions of the teacher-student relationship. Students also responded to a conflict resolution scenario. Results indicated that students in the treatment classes outperformed their counterparts in achieving stronger AIDS education and conflict management skills. (Contains 11 reference.) (SM)

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AIDS Education and Citizenship Development in a University/K-12 Partnership

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"We sink or swim together" – David and Roger Johnson

Abstract

Cooperative learning exists when students work together to accomplish shared learning goals. It has been around for a long time and is one of the most remarkable and heavily investigated areas of theory, research, and practice in education. The use of cooperative learning is so prevalent in education today that it is difficult to find textbooks on instructional methods, teachers' journals, or instructional materials that do not mention and utilize it, as there is broad dissemination of cooperative learning through teacher preparation programs, inservice professional development, and practitioner publications. (Johnson and Johnson, 1999).

The move toward standards-based instruction also has called for greater active student involvement in the learning process. Lately, cooperative learning has become an even more widely-used instructional procedure as many standards-based school departments advocate the greater employment of the "constructivist" classroom, in which students' actively participate in problem-solving and critical thinking regarding a learning activity as the most appropriate vehicle of instruction (Brunner 1979).

During academic year 2002-03, 42 students from California State, Hayward's Teacher Education credential program in conjunction with the *Build a Future Without AIDS* program at the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education, taught a conflict resolution curriculum/AIDS education curriculum to inner-city public schools students. These high school students were part of the Alameda County (CA) Office of Education's alternative school program for adjudicated youth. The CSUH students were members of the TED 5351, *Psychological Foundations of Education* winter 2003 class.

This program had been tested previously on the campus of the University of Minnesota in 1998-99, as well as at Cal. State, San Bernadino in 2001. Results were robust in determining stronger cooperation and conflict management skill - development as well as stronger attachment between public schools students and the University. (Mitchell and Quan, 2001).

Site and Design

Two ACOE alternative high schools school hosted the study. These schools serve a population that is predominantly Latino and African American. Students are from mostly single-parent households of lower to lower-middle income class status. Most students are within a 15-minute walk to school, however most are picked up for school each morning by a court-authorized van service.

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Students from these schools who received the curriculum were the treatment population, and a control group consisting of one class of similar age and demographical status that did not receive the curriculum who came from a similar alternative high school, were considered as subjects for this study.

Classroom teachers allowed the investigator to administer the dependent measures in their classrooms on a pre-post basis. A 2 x 2 factorial design was employed. A one-way ANOVA was used to determine results demonstrated by implementing a series of dependent measures related to conflict resolution and cooperation skills development (Johnson and Johnson, 1995,1999, Mitchell and Quan, 2001).

"Conflict leads to inquiry-inquiry leads to truth"- Thomas Jefferson

Citizenship Development and Cooperation

Good citizens need to be good listeners. They also need to be able to advocate their point-of-view in a way that is persuasive without alienating the other party. Both theoretical and practical reasons support the belief that arousing intellectual conflict is one of the most important and powerful instructional procedures available to teachers. The path to using intellectual conflict for instructional purposes lies primarily through cooperation and structured controversy. The curriculum consisted of a series of age-appropriate frameworks that relied heavily on the design of Creative Academic Controversy (Johnson and Johnson, 1998, Mitchell and Quan, 2001). Creative Academic Controversy is an educational strategy that employs the five elements of cooperative learning in the use of constructing positive intellectual conflict. Scenarios are given to participants who are then asked to follow framework that encompasses positive interdependence, individual accountability, group-processing, social skill development, in a face-to-face promotive interaction format.

Controversy as a Teaching Strategy

Controversy exists when one individual's ideas, information, conclusions, theories, and opinions are incompatible with those of another. To engage in controversy and seek to reach an agreement, students must research and prepare a position, present and advocate their position, refute opposing positions and rebut attacks on their own position, reverse perspectives, and create a synthesis that all group members can agree to. (Johnson and Johnson, 1995). This cooperation-based curriculum promotes intellectual discussion among all students (K-12). Its use resulted in increased achievement and retention, higher-quality problem solving and decision making, more frequent creative insight, more thorough exchange of expertise, greater task involvement, more positive interpersonal relationships among students, and greater social competence, self-esteem, and ability to

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cope with stress and adversity. The process from which these outcomes are derived involves an opposing point of view to an initial conclusion about an issue, a state of uncertainty or disequilibrium, which motivates a search for more information and a more adequate cognitive perspective, and the derivation of a new, re-conceptualized conclusion. The procedure used to implement this process consists of five steps: (1) researching and preparing the best case possible for the assigned position, (2) making a persuasive presentation as to the validity of the position, (3) engaging in an open discussion by continuing to advocate one's own position, attempting to refute the opposing position, and rebutting others' attacks, (4) reversing perspectives and presenting the opposing position as persuasively and completely as possible, and (5) creating a synthesis that is students' best reasoned judgment on the issue. The curriculum that was implemented focused on these strategies. This curriculum can be used in any subject area with any age student (Johnson and Johnson, 1998).

The University Student's Role

The undergraduate's role in implementing the curriculum consisted of specifying the objectives for learning social skills, making a number of decisions before beginning the process, explaining and orchestrating the academic task and the curriculum procedure, monitoring students as they engaged in the curriculum and intervening when necessary to improve students' work as individuals and a team, while each evaluated academic achievement by processing how well students performed as individuals within a team..

Instructional Procedure

The CSUH students randomly assigned the public schools students to groups of four, which were then divided into two pairs. Each pair was assigned a pro or a con position on an issue of the curriculum being studied. In step 1 of the procedure, each pair of students researched the assigned position, organized its findings into a conceptual framework that uses both inductive and deductive logic to persuade the audience that its position is valid and correct, and builds a persuasive and compelling case for the position's validity. In step 2, students persuasively presented the best case possible for their assigned position, listened carefully to the opposing presentation, and tried to learn the data and logic on which it is based. In step 3, students engaged in an open discussion, continuing to advocate their respective positions while trying to learn the opposing positions. They critically analyzed the evidence and logic of the opposing positions. At the same time, they rebutted the attacks on their evidence and logic in an effort to persuade the opponents to agree with them. In step 4, the students reversed perspectives and presented the opposing position as persuasively as they could. To free students from their perspective and to increase their understanding of the opposing perspective, the high school students were asked to reverse perspectives: Each pair presented the best case possible for the opposing position, being as sincere and enthusiastic as if the position were its own. The fifth step was synthesizing. Students integrated a number of

different ideas and facts into a single position. Synthesizing involved putting things together in fewer words, creative insight, and adopting a new position that subsumed the previous two. Students dropped all advocacy in order to see new patterns in a body of evidence. In achieving these purposes, students avoided the dualistic trap of choosing which position is "right" and which is "wrong," avoided the relativistic trap of stating that both positions are correct, depending on one's perspective, were asked to formulate a synthesis that everyone could agree to (Johnson and Johnson, 1998).

Age appropriateness

Some of the students were taught the curriculum procedure in a more scaled-down format, due to their perceived ability level. These subjects were given specific scenarios from which they could choose, and were taught the guidelines for group geared more toward the lower-ordered thinking levels of knowledge and comprehension according to the Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (Bloom, 1956).

Timeline

The timeline for the program's implementation was as follows:

Fall 2002: Partnership between Cal. State Hayward and Alameda county Office of education is established.

Fall 2002: School site is selected as part of the partnership.

November 2002 to March 2003: Teach the curriculum. Take initial dependent measures on a pre/post basis.

April 2003: Be completed in teaching the respective curriculum components and activities. Take final dependent measures and gather teacher anecdotal support. End of year celebration is planned for May at which ACOE students shall visit CSUH campus.

Instruments

Two instruments were used as part of this study. The cooperation measure was taken through the use of the Classroom Life script (Johnson and Johnson, 1995). This measure assessed the attitudes students had toward collaborating in a group as well as perceptions of the teacher/student relationship. The conflict resolution measure consisted of a given scenario students would respond to, citing various strategies they would use in resolving proposed conflicts. These strategies were then categorized as follows:

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(1)forcing, (2) withdrawing, (3) smoothing, (4) compromise, (5) seek integrated negotiated agreement. These strategies were cited from the works of Johnson and Johnson (1995, 1998).

Results

Public schools students who received the curriculum clearly outperformed their non-participating counterparts at achieving stronger achievement in learning AIDS education and conflict resolution skills.

One-way Analysis of AIDS education achievement Measure

Analysis of Variance

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	3	125.42	41.81	39.06	0.000*
Error	76	81.33	1.07		
Total	79	206.75			

Level	N	Mean	StDev
Trepre	25	2.040	1.274
Copre	15	1.800	1.207
Trepos	25	4.720	0.458
Copost	15	2.267	1.100

Pooled StDev = 1.034 * statistically significant

One-way Analysis of Variance- Conflict Measure

Analysis of Variance

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	4	153.617	38.404	40.04	0.000 *
Error	90	86.320	0.959		
Total	94	239.937			

Level	N	Mean	StDev
Copost	15	2.2667	1.0998
Trepre	25	1.8400	1.2477
Conpre	15	1.6667	0.8997
Teapos	25	4.8400	0.3742
ConPos	15	2.3333	1.1127

Pooled StDev = 0.9793 * statistically significant

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Discussion

Although numerous theorists have advocated the use of intellectual conflict in instructional situations, some have been reluctant to do so, perhaps because of a cultural fear of conflict, a lack of knowledge of the procedures, and cultural and pedagogical norms discouraging the use of conflict. This program's implementation provided a clear procedure for teachers to use in promoting intellectual conflict. The skills required to implement this procedure are intellectual skills that all students need to develop sooner or later.

Students in the treatment classes clearly outperformed their counterparts at achieving stronger AIDS education and conflict management skills.

Theoretical Foundations/ Practical Applications

This service learning program was able to address certain criteria set forth by The World Council on Citizenship (1994), which recommends that citizenship education be a statutory entitlement and that the statutory entitlement be established by setting out specific learning outcomes for each key stage. In addition to the citizenship component, the program's implementation has proven to be an effective tool for economic education. It helps student fulfill several of the standards developed by The National Council on Economic Education (1999):

1) Productive resources are limited. Students will learn that people can not have all the goods and services they want; as a result, they must choose some things and give up others.

2) Effective decision making requires comparing the additional costs of alternatives with the additional benefits. Students will learn that most choices involve doing a little more or a little less of something: few choices are "all or nothing" decisions.

3) Students will learn that different methods can be used to allocate goods and services. People acting individually or collectively through government, must choose which methods to use to allocate different kinds of goods and services.

4) Students will learn that people respond predictably to positive and negative incentives.

5) Voluntary exchange occurs only when all participating parties expect to gain. Students will learn conflict resolution skills with this in mind.

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The curriculum used by this program requires its participants to engage in these five strategy-based outcomes. In the course of structured discussion, students view their wants and points-of-view as resources, which are limited. The overall group decision making asks participants to weigh the benefits of each alternative in achieving a group decision. Group functioning requires its members to learn different methods of information allocation, while participants learn to appreciate the guidelines of creative controversy which focus on positive process. Likewise, the learned conflict resolution skills become a predictable outcome.

Plans for Expansion

This program was funded for another implementation by the Cal. State Hayward Office of Service Learning and shall be re-implemented with the same school populations being taught by a Master's in Education class, TED 6901 Graduate Synthesis this Spring 2003.

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